

REMARKS

Entry of the foregoing amendments are respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner have any questions concerning the subject application, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment to Preliminary Amendment dated December 17, 2001
Mark-up of Claims 1-13

1. (Amended) A sol, [characterized in that it comprises] comprising:
 - an aqueous phase;
 - particles of a phosphate of at least one rare earth selected from the group consisting of cerium and lanthanum;
 - an acid other than phosphoric acid, the cerium and lanthanum salts of which are soluble in water.
2. (Amended) A sol as claimed in claim 1, [characterized in that] wherein said acid is selected from acids with a pK_a of at least 3.
3. (Amended) A sol according to claim 1 [or claim 2], [characterized in that] wherein said acid is selected from the group consisting of nitric acid, acetic acid, formic acid, citric acid and propionic acid.
4. (Amended) A sol according to [any one of the preceding claims] claim 1, [characterized in that] wherein its pH is at least 4[, more particularly in the range 4 to 6].
5. (Amended) A sol according to [any one of the preceding claims] claim 1, [characterized in that] wherein the rare earth phosphate particles are constituted by elementary crystals 5 nm to 20 nm thick and in the range 25 nm to 200 nm in length.

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6. (Amended) A process for preparing a sol of a phosphate of at least one rare earth selected from the group consisting of cerium and lanthanum according to [any one of claims 1 to 5] claim 1, [is characterized in that it comprises] comprising the following steps:

- mixing a solution of salts of at least one of said rare earths with phosphate ions in a PO_4^{3-} /rare earth mole ratio of more than 1 with control of the pH of the reaction medium to a value of more than 2;
- then ageing the precipitate obtained if the value of the pH of the reaction medium is in the range 2 to 6;
- separating the precipitate from the reaction medium;
- re-dispersing said precipitate in water;
- adding at least one salt of said rare earth and said acid to the dispersion in a quantity such that the final PO_4^{3-} /rare earth mole ratio in the dispersion is equal to 1.

7. (Amended) A process for preparing a sol of a phosphate of at least one rare earth selected from cerium and lanthanum according to [any one of claims 1 to 5] claim 1, [characterized in that it comprises] comprising the following steps:

- continuously introducing, with stirring, a first solution of salts of at least one of said rare earths into a solution containing phosphate ions and with an initial pH of less than 2; the

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phosphate ions being present in a quantity such that the PO_4^{3-}
/rare earth mole ratio is more than 1;

- controlling the pH of the reaction medium to a substantially constant value of less than 2 during precipitation;
- separating the precipitate from the reaction medium;
- re-dispersing said precipitate in water;
- adding at least one salt of said rare earth and said acid to the dispersion obtained in a quantity such that the final PO_4^{3-} /rare earth mole ratio in the dispersion is 1.

8. (Amended) A process according to claim 6 [or claim 7], [characterized in that] wherein the pH of the precipitation medium is controlled by adding a basic compound.

9. (Amended) A process according to claim 8, [characterized in that] wherein said basic compound is ammonium hydroxide.

10. (Amended) A process according to [any one of claims 6 to 9] claim 6, [characterized in that] wherein said phosphate ions are in the form of an ammonium phosphate solution[, more particularly mono-ammonium phosphate or di-ammonium phosphate].

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11. (Amended) A polishing suspension, [characterized in that it comprises] comprising a sol according to [any one of claims 1 to 5 or a sol as obtained by the process of any one of claims 6 to 10] claim 1.

12. (Amended) [Use of a sol according to any one of claims 1 to 5 or a sol as obtained by the process of any one of claims 6 to 10, on a substrate as an] An anti-corrosion agent comprising the sol according to claim 1.

13. (Amended) [Use of a sol according to any one of claims 1 to 5 or a sol as obtained by the process of any one of claims 6 to 10, as an] An anti-UV agent comprising the sol according to claim 1.